

## Should rich countries help poorer ones?

*Does foreign aid work? Or does it only help the rich country by keeping the poorer country dependent?*

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Today, the world is becoming more and more closely linked. Trade has increased and the movement of people between countries is greater than ever before. However, billions of people still live in poverty, and in many places, the gap between rich and poor is widening. This essay will look at the arguments for and against helping poor countries.

There are many reasons for helping poor countries. First of all, there are humanitarian reasons. Like individuals who give to charity, many countries feel it is their religious, social, or moral duty to help people in other countries who are suffering from famine, drought, war, or disease. However, many rich countries also donate money for political or diplomatic reasons. They want to maintain a relationship of dependency with the recipient, or simply to influence the government and direction of the country. A further reason why many countries help poorer ones is for economic reasons. The donors may want to control the supply of commodities such as oil, water, or wheat. Alternatively, the richer country may want to ensure markets for their own products, whether these are planes, computers or shoes.

However, aid is not necessarily the best way to help a country. For one thing, billions of dollars of aid often goes missing, into corrupt governments or inefficient administration. A second point is that many foreign aid projects are unsuitable for the target country. Many agencies build huge dams or industrial projects that fail after a few years or that do not involve the local people. Furthermore, much aid returns to the donor. This can be in the form of expensive specialized equipment and experts from the donor country.

There are many other ways we can help poor countries. Opening up trade barriers, so that poor countries can sell their goods is one way. Another is to remove subsidies so that imported goods from poorer countries can compete fairly. A third method is to forgive debts. Many poor countries have huge interest repayments on old loans.

The needs of the poorer countries may seem obvious. However, although our humanity makes us want to help eliminate poverty and suffering, we must examine the real needs of poor countries and implement solutions that will benefit both them and us.

## Bibliography

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